

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. released the following statement today after the U.S. Supreme Court decisions on the University of Michigan Affirmative Action cases. The high court upheld the university's law school program by a 5-4 vote. A 6-3 vote found the undergraduate program unconstitutional.

Congressman Jackson said:

"The Supreme Court has affirmed not just affirmative action, but our nation's commitment to judging individuals by the 'content of their character' not just in word but in deed. Affirmative Action has given not just minorities but women many opportunities in education and business that they would not have had otherwise.

"However, we must take this opportunity to address the underlying problem that the Michigan cases brought to light-the lack of equal high quality educational opportunity for ALL Americans. A student's ability to learn from the best teachers, in the best classrooms, with the latest technology and other materials should not be limited by race, income, or geography. The next time the Supreme Court decides a case regarding education, it should be in the context of a constitutionally-mandated right to an education of equal high quality. When every child has a chance at that level of education from the start, then we can quibble about numbers and programs once they reach college.

"I encourage those who put so many resources into fighting this and other affirmative action education programs to join me in eradicating the fundamental inequality that maintains the need for the programs. Fight to cure the cold, not just the cough. Fight for the constitutional right to an education of equal high quality. Fight for H.J.R. 29."